

# BUFORA NEWSFILE

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—WEST CUMBERLAND TIMES & STAR

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## CE4 - abducted by aliens

ACCORDING to UPOLOGY there are five sorts of Close Encounters.

CE1, as first defined by the expert Hynek, is seeing a UFO within 150 yards. CE2 is one where a UFO leaves some form of physical evidence, such as a burn on the ground.

A Close Encounter of the Third Kind (as immortalised in Steven Spielberg's film) is a sighting of an entity associated with a UFO. CE4 is abduction by an alien and CE5 is a direct contact or communication with an alien being or race.

Nick Pope, former UFO desk officer at the Ministry of Defence's Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a claims that the abduction phenomenon is a fact of life.

"The evidence for abductions is so strong as to be virtually undeniable," he says. And in his new book, *The Uninvited*, he lifts the lid on the plethora of accounts he has amassed during his own Fox Mulder-style search for the Truth.

The S-Files was recently contacted by a man from Washington who believes he was abducted by aliens in 1949, when he was just seven years-old. He now wants



to go through regressive hypnosis to delve deeper into his deeply disturbing experience.

It's a compelling, at times confusing, tale and even Walter (not his real name), who has previously undergone electric shock therapy, still has difficulty coming to terms with what he believes happened to him.

He was off school, recovering from a bout of chicken pox, on the day it happened. Walter remembers the day was sunny and warm and he was wandering through fields near Armathwaite Hall, where he found a quiet spot to lie down under some trees. While staring up at the sky he spotted a black speck, which, believing it to be a fly, tried to swat away at first.

But the speck wasn't a fly at all. As it came closer, Walter saw it was a huge oval craft with three spherical shapes, like metal ball-bearings underneath. And in the middle he remembers seeing a white energy source.

"The next thing I knew was that a black rubbery circle had formed underneath me and there was an intense heat, hotter than the sun could ever be. I was burning, my flesh seemed to be scorched and it felt like my head wasitching with a thousand creepy crawlies."

Then, completely enveloped in the 'carpet,' he was lifted off the ground and sucked up toward the craft.

Paralysed with fear, Walter couldn't even scream as he was pulled past the stainless-steel like surface of the

craft and into a vast chamber inside.

The walls were covered with huge black computer-like machines; green, blue, orange and purple lights flashed and strange noises: different toned thumps and vibrations, echoed around.

But Walter was not alone: there were six other children in the room - three boys and three girls. And then there were the creatures - strange reptilian-like beings which did not speak.

"They seemed to get inside your head, like telepathy.

They touched our hands and faces in a gentle manner but we were all petrified and were crying for our mums,"

said Walter, who still shudders when he recalls what happened next.

The children were taken in pairs and strapped down on beds where they were hypnotised into a deep sleep ...

● Read next week's S-Files to find out what happened to Walter and how the experience changed his life forever.

An alien

In the files of **Fortean Times**, the journal of **strange phenomena**, lurk some **wild** and **weird** road tales

journeys through monotonous countryside can induce a hypnagogic state on the threshold of sleep - a sort of 'white line fever' - where hallucinations can appear startlingly real.

But it is certainly unusual for four people to have the same dream. And the **buzz** tyre was real enough. What's more, at about the same time a fishing boat off the nearby coast was approached by a UFO which also made the crew speak in squeaky voices. Make of it what you will...

These exotic stories are not always from faraway places. On October 27 1974, for instance, John and Sue Day and their three children were driving home to Aveley in Essex at around 10pm when they saw a bright light following them and entered an odd fog bank. When they got home, it was one in the morning. About three hours had gone missing.

Under hypnotic regression many months later, a

bizarre tale of abduction and medical examination by aliens emerged. And, just as in the Australian story, the car had been lifted up from the road.

Here's another tale from 1988. On the night of June 29, a shy teenager called Chris Davis from Brownstown, South Carolina, was changing a flat tyre near Scape Ore Swamp when he was attacked by a scaly green biped with glowing red eyes. Davis drove off, but the creature ran after him and jumped on the roof. He accelerated and swerved and the creature tumbled off into the darkness. When the terrified teenager reached home, his father examined the car and found the wing mirror twisted, and scratches on the roof.

Two weeks later a couple found their Ford 'chewed up' near the swamp and heard about the teenager's encounter. Davis was interviewed by the police, the Lizard Man (as he became known) hit the papers and

soon, as is the way with these things, other witnesses came forward. That summer, Brownstown had more visitors than at any time in history.

The American investigator John Keel summarised 16 encounters between American drivers and what he calls 'Abominable Swamp Slugs'. He remarked on their penchant for chasing cars, something no bear or shag Bigfoot would ever do.

Several encounters have features that parallel the one in Scape Ore Swamp. In August 1986 Joseph Whaley was chased in his jeep outside Edison, Georgia, by a large grey hairy hominoid with claws and long pointed ears, which tried to haul him from the jeep.

Then there was Charles Wetzel's encounter in Riverside, California, in November 1958. A long-armed scaly creature with glowing eyes leapt in front of his car and left long scratches on the windshield.

And in November 1966 a young woman was changing a tyre on a lonely road outside Brooksville in Florida when she encountered a huge hairy biped with large green eyes and an eerie greenish glow.

So next time you're driving at night, keep a careful eye open. There may be more out there on the road than the occasional hedgehog... □

## STROUD NEWS & JOURNAL

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## Mystery lights were balloons

Madam - In reply to your article (SNJ, July 23) 'UFO seen over Downs'. On the evening of Thursday, July 17 I was with friends at the open-air production of *All's well that ends well* at Chavenage House.

We also saw the orange lights. We decided they were a group of hot air balloons and all we could see were their burners, which is why some were brighter than others and seemed to pulse like stars.

They did not seem to be as near as Ashton Down though.

Linda Higgs

Bath Road, Stroud

# Mystery of hovering lights that zig-zag too

Flood of reports excites UFO experts

**A** MYSTERIOUS series of West sightings has excited UFO experts after 17 separate incidents in six days.

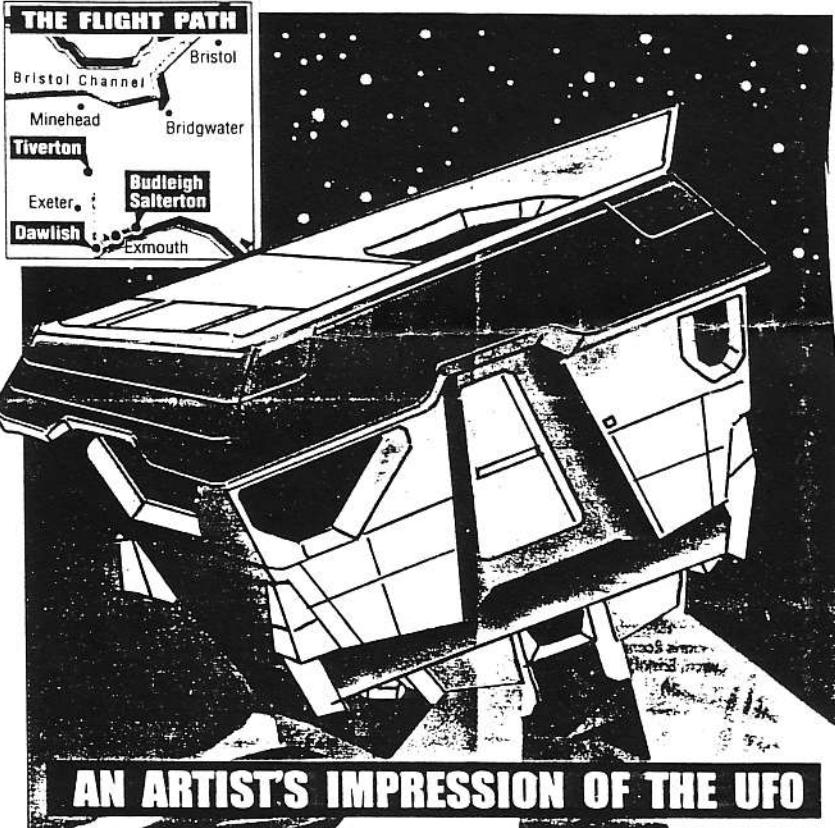
John Downes, head of the Exeter Strange Phenomenon research group, has been inundated with calls reporting strange bright lights that hover or zig-zag in the sky.

Six people saw them on Sunday July 27, three people on Monday 28, and at least two more every day until Friday August 1. All the incidents occurred between Budleigh Salterton and Tiverton in East Devon.

Tracey Wilson, an accountant in Exeter, saw the lights from her bedroom window in Tiverton at 10pm on Monday.

She said: "I went to open the window and saw these bright orange and white lights moving across the sky. They glowed for about two minutes, flared brightly and then disappeared."

**M**ost first instincts were that they belonged to an aircraft, but that doesn't account for the way they flared. They were much brighter than normal aeroplane lights."



AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION OF THE UFO

By Simon Haigh

Most of the 17 witnesses said the lights burned as brightly as magnesium, but some saw only one colour and others more.

Barry Payne from Dawlish, near Exmouth, saw a light at 10.30pm on Tuesday while he was out walking his dog.

He said: "I saw a bright orange and white light flying slowly above me. It seemed to zig-zag a little and I remember thinking it was heading north towards Exmouth."

William Frazer-Jennings of Budleigh Salterton reported

seeing a bright rectangular light at 9.30pm on Sunday.

"It just appeared and rose slowly," he said. "I rushed in to get my binoculars and saw it hover for about four minutes and then blink out. Because my house is on a hill I had a pretty good view."

Ufologist Mr Downes, aged

37, traced the sightings on a map and found a clear line which, if carried forward, went across the Bristol Channel and into South Wales.

He said: "It's incredible. The phone just kept ringing."

"There have been previous sightings in all these areas. We are taking this very seriously."

YELLOW ADVERTISER BARKING EAST HAM BECTON EDITION

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## UFO reported in Beckton

**FIVE** Beckton locals claim to have seen a UFO hovering above flats near Campion Close in the early hours of Thursday (July 17) morning.

Jacqueline Honeyman, Vivien Cottenden and her two sons were shocked to see the object, described as a bright light the size of a football, which was spotted at around 3am.

After watching it for several minutes, the light moved upwards and decreased to the size of a star, before disappearing.

"It couldn't have been an aeroplane or a helicopter because it wasn't making a noise and the light was not flashing," said 30-year-old Jacqueline of Campion Close.

"I rushed inside to get my camera, but the flash would not work when I tried to take a picture."

"Then the minute I got back inside I tried to take a photo of my dog and the flash worked."

"I called my husband and he saw it from the bedroom window."

The sighting occurred close to busy London City Airport, but staff there say the airport was closed at the time.

A spokeswoman said: "Flights finish at around 9.30pm and start up again at 6.30am, but we saw nothing unusual on our

report from Thames radar which patrols the airspace around this area 24-hours a day."

Did any other readers witness the UFO, or have they got bizarre sightings over the east London sky to report?

If so, call our newsdesk on 0181 530 3641.

SEVENOAKS CHRONICLE

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## Residents mystified by UFO sightings

**AN X-FILE** investigation is being mounted by residents in Sheden Close, Sevenoaks, following sightings of an unidentified flying object around the cul-de-sac.

Householders claim to have watched a "disc-shaped craft with lights around the rim" hovering above trees between mid-

night and 3am for several months. It was seen again on Tuesday night.

Dorothy Shuter, who lives in the road, told the Chronicle that several people, including her son and next-door neighbour, had spotted the UFO.

She said: "My son saw it first and told me. On another occasion I walked outside

and saw it myself."

"You feel a bit silly saying you've seen something like this but when other people have seen it you start to wonder what's up there? I've no idea what it is."

She said the object made no sound and often remained in the same position for several hours before

moving across the sky.

"I wouldn't have believed it unless I'd seen it myself," she said.

• The last UFO sighting reported to police in this area was in July 1986 when a woman in her late 20s, who asked not to be identified, saw a "snake-shaped" craft just above trees below Westerham Hill.

## Couple spot UFO

Strange lights have been seen in the sky above Lavant. Mr and Mrs Alan and Dorcas King say they saw odd waves of light going in streaks above their home early on Friday morning.

"The lights took up the whole sky," said Mrs King. "They came across and disappeared, but then came back after about 15 seconds."

"There was nothing round here that it seemed to be coming from. It was really weird."

Mr and Mrs King had no idea what the lights were or where they came from.

The truth is out there....



## UFO sightings: Woman reveals she saw object

ANOTHER UFO witness has come forward to back up the claims of the Wisbech family who sighted a strange object flying near the A47.

The 21-year-old woman, who does not wish to be named, was returning from a deer stalking expedition at 7.30pm around the same date as the party of four were travelling back to their Wisbech home.

The secretarial worker and her farmer boyfriend (26) saw a triangular shaped object through the sights of a hunting rifle as it hovered over the A16 near Holbeach.

She reports an eerie

silence, no engine noise, and a "boomerang" shaped object with lights on it.

She said: "The whole thing lasted six or seven minutes."

"It was the strangest experience of my life and when I read about the other sighting, it gave me the shivers."

Only this week *The Evening Telegraph* revealed how a car full of people were buzzed by a strange object on the A47 between Peterborough and Wisbech.

The British-based International UFO Research Network (IUFOR) is investigating the case.

STRATHSPEY & BADENOCH HERALD  
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## Light thrown on Aviemore UFO incident

THE TRUTH is out there .... the recent mystery surrounding strange alien lights hovering in the sky near Aviemore has been solved.

Aviemore Police received a telephone call from Rothiemurchar Estate following a report in the "Strathy" two weeks ago describing how a couple had fled in terror from Tullochgrue after being "buzzed" by an unidentified flying object.

Rothiemurchar's head stalker, Mr Jimmy Gordon, contacted police to explain that he and a fellow estate worker had been out that night, July 10, spotlighting for foxes.

Sergeant John Grierson said: "They were using the estate's Land Rover which has four very high power lights on the front. They also had hand lamps with them which have red filters which would account for why the lights turned red when they moved."

The pair were spotting for foxes at exactly the same time as the lights were encountered and it would appear that they were in the sky if the couple were watching from Tullochgrue."

Sergeant Grierson said that it was not uncommon for spotlighting on estates to be mistaken for UFOs.

Joanne Munro, (17), from Edinburgh, and friend Andrew Smith, (28), told the "Strathy" how they had been driving along a dark country lane near to Tullochgrue, just south of Aviemore, when they spotted six strange lights in the sky.

They said that they had stared transfixed for nearly two hours at the circular shaped UFOs before fleeing after one of the bright lights came too close for comfort.

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## UFO watch on Yorks coast

UFO investigators are to watch the skies over the Yorkshire Coast next week after a spate of strange sightings in the area.

Over the past two months there have been more than 10 reports of UFOs in the Scarborough, Filey and Bridlington area.

On one occasion, a woman from Scarborough reported seeing a flying object resembling a hockey puck in the sky over the resort.

Russ Keitel, of UFO Research Network, said: "The East Coast is just incredible for sightings

of UFOs at the moment. Flying saucers have been seen and someone saw something which resembled a bell which had fairy lights on it. It was all very strange."

He and members of the Bradford-based group, are to visit Scarborough next weekend. Armed with video cameras, computers and satellite tracking devices they will be scanning the skies for evidence of extra-terrestrials.

"Hopefully we will get evidence of UFOs on camera," he said.

# Five kinds: from flying saucers to cigar-like craft

## Paperwork backs up existence of UFOs

Sir, — As American military aircraft have been stationed in East Anglia since 1942, almost without a break, it does now seem likely that they initiated the many reports of sightings in our skies and elsewhere of unidentified flying objects (UFOs).

Indeed, it appears that the "rubber men" sometimes associated with crashed UFOs were, well, just a way of making the public believe they had come from another planet.

In recapping on my UFO records, I find that on May 7, 1977, while clawing through a box of old books on a street cart in Soho, London, I came on a solitary military-like manual of 50 pages entitled *UFO Guide and Handbook*.

With the introductions dated London 1957, the manual stated that "the USAF at first investigated, then denied, and finally admitted the existence of UFOs".

Interestingly, the contents of the manual were datable because the compiler, Clifford Thornton by name, said his analysis covered sightings made "during the past nine weeks" which meant we were concerned with the early post-war years into the middle 1950s.

The manual claimed that in 1957 there were "14 different types of UFO, in five broad categories: type I — large cigar-shaped

craft; type II — flying saucers; type III — manual craft; type IV — disc-shaped low-flying craft; type V — small spherical remote-controlled craft".

Referring to type IV, the manual described one version as descending almost to the ground. It was "thought to be a manned low-level reconnaissance/photographic craft, perhaps topographical survey".

The description concluded: "Not many sightings have taken place as, usually, the machine operates late at night or early in the morning, but always after dark".

Even more interesting, in my view, was the realisation on the death of a retired British army officer in West Suffolk in 1994, that the paperwork his family were about to destroy revealed him as one of the trusted British spotters commissioned by the USAF/RAF to keep an eye on wide-eyed local UFO enthusiasts!

He appears to have conducted correspondence with the public as if he were a complete novice.

I was given the paperwork, for the asking, including the many specialist publications he started taking from the early 1950s.

This seems to fit in with my Soho manual discovery about UFOs as dating from the early post-war years.

CHRISTOPHER R ELLIOTT,  
South Park Road,  
Wimbledon

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# Night we saw UFOs in forest

By CHRIS GIBBINGS

ONE of the world's biggest UFO mysteries, which happened right here in Suffolk, is the subject of a nationwide lecture tour which arrives in Ipswich early next month.

Speculation over what happened in Rendlesham Forest has never died down since reported sightings of UFOs outside the American airbase at RAF Woodbridge in December 1980.

A forthcoming book, *Left at East Gate*, is an account of what is said to have happened.

It is co-written by Larry Warren, a former security guard at the base who claims to have witnessed the strange occurrences.

Mr Warren and co-author Peter Robbins are Americans who have teamed up to promote interest in UFOs, or unidentified flying objects.

They will give a joint lecture and sign copies of their book in the 180-seater council chamber at the Ipswich Corn Exchange on June 6.

Organiser of the event is Dave Wright, a life-

## Writers shed new lights on riddles

long enthusiast of the subject known as Ufology. He is confident the Ipswich lecture will give the interest in UFOs the boost it deserves.

"It's time this happened in Suffolk. There's not been a talk by Larry Warren here before, as far as I'm aware, so I'm pleased this is happening," said Mr Wright, who lives in Ipswich.

### Incident

UFO enthusiasts agree there were unexpected incidents over more than one night, said Mr Wright. In the first, two guards were ordered into the woods to investigate flashing lights and came across a triangular craft which they followed through the forest until it shot off into the sky.

The main incident took place the following night when a party of officers and guards saw a cloud of mist form in a field on the forest edge. A red light flew in to hover above the mist and exploded and a large craft was observed on the ground where the mist had been.

Military authorities have always denied that any such incidents took place as described, but Mr Wright and others disagree strongly.

"There was definitely something other-worldly in Rendlesham Forest at that time," said Mr Wright.

Left at East Gate takes its title from a direction. Larry Warren says he was given as a guard involved during one of the incidents.

Tickets for the lecture, which begins at 7.30pm, are available at £3 each from Amberside Bookshop in Upper Orwell Street, Central City Council in Eagle Street, the Corn Exchange box office, and from Dave Wright, 136 Woodbridge Road, Ipswich, IP4 2NS.

The book is published in the UK by Michael O'Mara Books Ltd on June 6 — the date of the Ipswich lecture — at £15.99.

PLUCKY pensioner Noreen Skinner was not fazed when she met a 7ft alien in her garden ... she had a go and shouted: "You silly s---".

Mrs Skinner, 73, who lives with husband Wally in Blackbird Leys, Oxford, decided to reveal her close encounter after reading of Charlie Taylor's story about aliens in the *Oxford Mail* on Tuesday.

She said: "It was six years ago, but when I read in your story that strange things happened to Mr Taylor in Blackbird Leys everything came rushing back like it was yesterday.

"It was 2am and for some reason I got up and went outside. Suddenly this thing appeared, it looked like a

man, and I was terrified. But I thought, you're not going to frighten me so I shouted at him. You silly s---". He didn't answer and walked away stiffly like he was sleepwalking.

"He was handsome in a Martian sort of way. He had an athletic body but I couldn't see his face."

Mrs Skinner told her neighbours what she saw, but does not think they believed her. One of them sug-

gested that it might have been a riot policeman.

But she said: "I know what policemen look like. He looked nothing like the riot police."

"I never used to believe in these sort of things, but now I think something is happening. I don't think we are alone."

Mr Skinner said: "I've heard this story from day one. If we can get on the moon why can't they get here? We think we are the brainy ones, but who is to say others aren't brainier."

• Have you met an alien? Write to Lawrence Webb, Allen correspondent, OxFiles Desk, *Oxford Mail*, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0EJ. Please include your name, address and phone number.

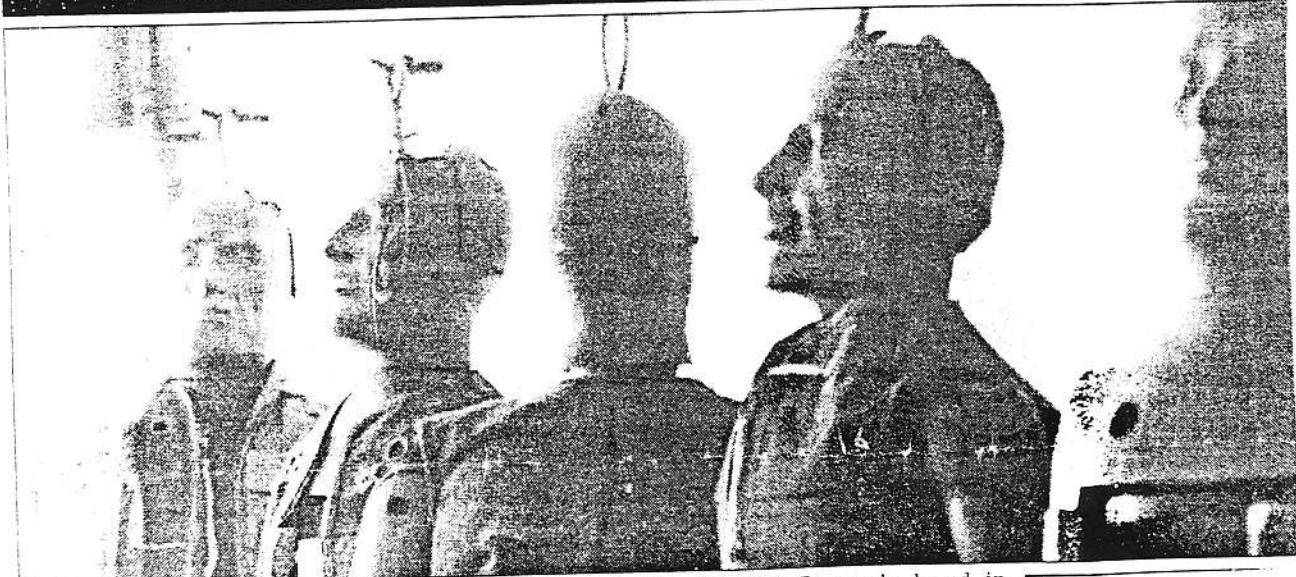
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## Roswell test dummy claim alien to UFO group



CONSPIRACY theorists and UFO-spotters today dismissed a report from the American Air Force which insists aliens never crashed-landed in what became known as the Roswell Incident.

In the report published yes-

terday, military chiefs claimed the alien-like bodies removed from the New Mexico desert 50 years ago were aluminum and plastic test dummies, of the type pictured above, used in high-altitude parachute drops.

But America's Private Fund

for UFO Research, based in Maryland, attacked the report, saying dummies were not used in parachute tests before 1955.

It asks how all the witnesses involved could have mistaken dummies for "creatures from outside the Earth".

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# Walter seeks the truth about his alien encounter

MANY of you will still be recovering from the media's recent 'alien invasion' to mark the 50th anniversary of the first modern-day UFO sighting.

But for Walter, of Workington, who believes he has been abducted by aliens, there is no such escape. Memories of his terrifying experience continue to haunt him, almost half a century on. And he's desperate to undergo regressive hypnosis to get to the bottom of what really happened to him when he was just seven years old.

This week's *S-Files* continues Walter's extraordinary close encounter.

AFTER being stripped and strapped down onto a bed, Walter (not real name) recalls seeing a terrifying machine, with a drill-like attachment, coming down from the ceiling towards him.

"I felt pains in my nose, ears and the back of my throat. My private parts were sore to touch and I felt as though I had in some way been violated," he said.

After the aliens had finished their



trance-like state. When Walter awoke, he found himself two miles away from the spot where he had first seen the craft. About three days had elapsed.

Semi-naked and mumbling incoherently, he was discovered by a policeman and taken home, where he remembers being confined to bed for two weeks.

"Eventually I started to get my confidence back. But I found that a lot of changes had happened to me. My intelligence had radically improved," said Walter, who at that time, had no recollection of what had happened to him.

Where previously he had struggled at school, he now found he was able to grasp maths easily and could answer questions he knew the teacher was going to ask next.

He still experiences some form of pre-cognition, which he calls his 'extra-

He claims to be able to read minds and predict certain events.

A year after his close encounter, Walter's powers were put to the test when he was assessed, along with other children, on a variety of psychological and mind-reading tests at a centre in Carlisle.

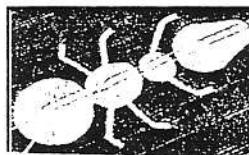
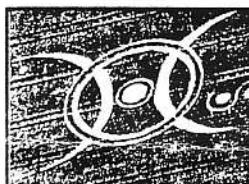
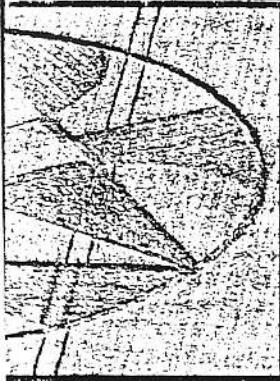
That's where he remembers having his first taste of regressive hypnosis - it brought memories of his alien encounter flooding back.

But today, believing he has much more to learn about what happened to him, he wants to go under hypnosis again.

"I am convinced there is a whole load of information locked away in my mind. I want that door opened wide so I can find out exactly what happened to me all those years ago," he said.

- To learn more about the weird and wonderful world of UFOs, pop along to Hallam University in Sheffield next month. The British UFO Research Association is staging a two day conference, 50 years of UFOs, on August 16 and 17. Call 01484 721993 for details.

BY GREY STRANGERS... CLOSE ENCOUNTERS ARE GETTING EVER CLOSER...



## SPACESHIP ABDUCTED ONE MAN AND HIS DOG

BROADCASTER Lawrence John has told for the first time how he and his faithful pet dog Lobo were abducted by aliens.

They were beamed on to a spaceship during an astonishing close encounter.

Lawrence, 46, who runs his own radio station and two record shops, said yesterday: "People might say I'm barking mad but we are not alone..."

Lawrence and three-year-old bichon frise Lobo, were exploring the eerie St Patrick's Chair and Well rock formation on the northern side of the Co Monaghan border when their out-of-this-world encounter happened.

"We were suddenly enveloped in a blinding white light," said Lawrence. "I found myself outside what appeared to be some sort of spacecraft and several aliens appeared in front of me."

"They were greyish, dullish and human in form. They appeared to be hovering. They were about 5ft tall and seemed to be wearing something resembling a turban."

"I asked if I was safe and one simulated my own voice to reply that I was and I could shortly go back to where I came from."

"The craft we were in was



BEAMED UP: Lawrence and Lobo

Picture: PACEMAKER

By JOE BRADY

enormous. While on board I saw probably four or five aliens. But they kept coming and going and all looked so alike, so it could have been 50."

Suddenly they were back at St Patrick's Chair and Well.

He checked his car clock and estimated he had been on board for around an hour and a half.

Lawrence, of Belfast, said: "Lobo

now often just sits at the window and just stares at the sky."

He has had two other meetings with aliens at the same spot since that first encounter last September but apart from brief flashbacks he can remember little. He said: "I've witnessed something incredible. Yet for some reason they do not want me to remember clearly."

UFO expert Myles Johnston believes the spot is part of an energy line which the aliens use as a fuelling station.

## I had an alien's baby

MUM-OF TWO Debbie Jordan had an out-of-this-world experience — she was made pregnant by aliens!

Then the sinister grey figures invaded her body again — to whisk away the child before it was born.

Since those first bizarre experiences they have repeatedly taken control of the 37-year-old farm girl's thoughts, transforming her from average intelligence into a super-brilliant with an IQ of 150.

This week Debbie travels from her remote US farmhouse in Indiana to pay her first visit to Britain.

She will tell her remarkable story — authenticated by doctors and scientists — at next weekend's British UFO Conference in Sheffield.

Debbie was 18 when she was abducted one night in November while in a car with two girlfriends. Afterwards she found herself back in her bed at 3am.

A few months later I found I was pregnant. The doctor timed the date of conception back to that night.

"It was weird — then things got stranger still. Later when I went for check-up, I discovered that I was no longer pregnant. I'd not miscarried.

"At first shrinks thought I had some buried trauma and treated me for stress disorders.

"Others thought I was nuts. I had lie detector tests, brain scans and every psychological test going. They all showed I was of sound mind."

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## BOOKS

### WHY PEOPLE BELIEVE WEIRD THINGS

#### Pseudoscience, Superstition and Other Confusions of Our Time

By Michael Shermer. Illustrated.

Foreword by Stephen Jay Gould. 306 pages. \$22.95. W.H. Freeman & Co.

Reviewed by Richard Bernstein

THE United States is a country where phone lines are clogged by people dialing the Psychic Friends Network to get some hints as to their future prospects. If you are among these psychic friends, or if you are one who believes in creationist science or has had an out-of-body experience during which you had a taste of the world to come, then this book by Michael Shermer is going to challenge some of your most cherished notions.

Shermer teaches the history of science at Occidental College in Los Angeles and is the publisher of *Skeptic* magazine, which wages the battle of rationalism and science against superstition and wishful thinking.

In "Why People Believe Weird Things," he provides a catalogue of silly and sometimes pernicious notions, ranging from iridology (by which specialists claim to be able to diagnose, say, kidney disease by examining one's iris) to Holocaust denial to recovered memory syndrome, reliance on which has actually

sent a few people, accused of having committed crimes decades earlier, to prison.

Beyond his exposé of contemporary superstition and other forms of nonsense, Shermer attempts to describe not just what people believe but also why they believe it. His book is far better in the exposé sections than in the explanatory ones, where despite the promise of his title he has little new to say. Early on he demonstrates the pervasiveness of mystical beliefs, citing a Gallup Poll of 1991 that showed 52 percent of Americans believing in astrology, 46 percent in extrasensory perception and 42 percent in communication with the dead.

"Other popular ideas of our time that have little scientific support include dowsing, the Bermuda Triangle, poltergeists, biorhythms, creationism, levitation, psychokinesis, astrology, ghosts, psychic detectives, UFOs, remote viewing, Kirlian auras, emotions in plants, life after death, monsters, graphology, crypto-zoology, clairvoyance, mediums, pyramid power, faith healing, Big Foot, psychic prospecting, haunted houses, perpetual motion machines, antigravity locations and, amusingly, astrological birth control."

No doubt superstition is widespread. Still, Shermer would have done well to exercise a bit of the skepticism he proclaims as his guiding principle, asking how this alarming poll was conducted and whether it measured real conviction

or a casual flirtation with notions of the invisible. Do more than half of Americans really believe that being a Taurus makes them different from being a Capricorn, or do they just consult their horoscopes for fun? The distinction is too important to have been neglected.

In any case, when Shermer recounts some of his own adventures in the debunking trade — he is often invited to appear on television, for example, to refute the claims of psychics — his account is lively and interesting.

In the best parts of Shermer's book he shows how some of the more popular mystical practices work — how, for example, a skillful psychic can stun an audience by seeming to know intimate details of the lives of some of its members, when, in fact, all he or she is doing is uttering generalities and making shrewd observations of particular individuals.

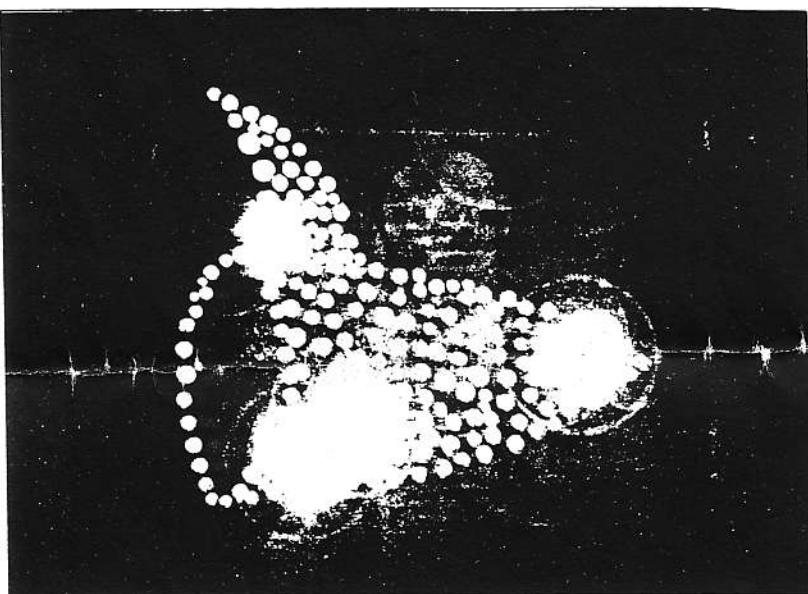
"Why People Believe Weird Things" turns in its final chapters into a kind of intellectual autobiography, not devoid of self-promotion, in which Shermer anoints himself expert on a huge array of subjects.

But in those areas where he is expert — the persistence of superstition is the most important — his book provides a useful antidote to the nonsense that surrounds us.

Richard Bernstein is on the staff of *The New York Times*.

# Skywatchers in a tizz

## Close encounter with witnesses to UFO mystery



An artist's impression of what one of the eye-witnesses saw.

## Stories of mystery lights flashing through the sky

SIGHTINGS of mysterious flying objects and strange lights are not new to the area with most reports having no obvious explanation.

In February, 1996, Jean Iveson and husband Gordon were returning to their home in Hull Road, Eastington, when a mysterious blue light enveloped their car.

Mr Iveson claimed the light hovered over the car for several min-

utes before shooting off into the night sky.

In November, 1995, Tom Delph, a pigeon fancier from Lowther Street, Kingston upon Hull, observed a series of coloured lights hovering a mile above the city.

Mr Delph claimed the lights were too large to be a conventional aircraft and definitely wasn't a helicopter.

In June, 1995, five separate sightings of the same strange lights hovering over the city were reported.

One witness, Mrs Carol Kennedy, reported seeing a long object with a row of coloured lights along the side, moving slowly over her home in Laughton Road, Beverley.

In May, 1995, Mr Dave Ombler saw two large white lights in the sky over his home in Humbleton.

The lights hovered in the sky for 10 minutes before moving noiselessly off towards the coast.

In December, 1994, Sandra Walton and her mother Muriel Rowbottom observed giant orange balls hovering over their bungalow in Sproatley. Mrs Walton then watched a white craft in the sky which filled the sky.

Later, Mrs Walton found strange markings and indentations in the ground near her house where she believes the UFO landed.

In September, 1994, student Lucy Brooke saw a huge glowing orange ball of light flash across the night sky as she drove from her home in Burton Pidsea.

She said: "It darted across the sky and looked like it was playing about then it just disappeared. It didn't fade away, it just disappeared out of the sky."

**E**XCITED skywatchers have contacted the Mail to confirm reports of a mysterious UFO sighted near the Humber Bridge.

The Mail reported this week how a Hessle couple spotted a silver dome-shaped object clearly visible and hovering

above the river as they strolled along Sullivan Way at 8pm on Sunday, July 27.

The RAF said they had not received any similar reports about the sighting but people from all over the city contacted us to say they had seen the object at around the same time.

Kim Misbet (19), from Sutton Park, observed an oval-shaped object for nearly 20 minutes as she enjoyed a drink with friends at the Century Park Inn at around 8pm on the same day.

"It definitely wasn't a plane or an aircraft. It was silver in colour and had very bright lights at the front. We couldn't believe our eyes," she said.

Shane Ford (22), from St Luke's Street, Kingston upon Hull, saw a similar object at around 8pm as he walked down Freetown Way to meet his girlfriend.

"I was looking towards the Humber Bridge and I saw what looked like a jumbo Jet but it didn't have any wings. It was cigar-shaped but as it moved away it seemed to change shape to a circle then it

stopped and hovered," he said.

Mr Ford saw the object at around 8pm, exactly the same time as other reported sightings, and described the object as unlike any conventional aircraft.

"It hovered for long periods and then moved very quickly but it wasn't a helicopter or a plane," he added.

**I was looking towards the Humber Bridge and I saw what looked like a jumbo Jet but it didn't have any wings.**

## Reactions to those lights in the sky

REPORTS of a mysterious object hovering or flying near the Humber bridge have flooded in from all over the city.

Mr Len Ledger (61), of Padstow Close, Bransholme, reported seeing a strange light in the sky at around 8pm on Sunday, July 27.

He said: "My wife pointed out a light in the sky. It hung in the sky for a while then slowly dimmed and went out. It was a maroon colour which made me think it was a distress flare but my wife said it was a UFO."

Teenager Neil Stable (14), from Glenfield Drive, Kingston upon Hull, also claims to have seen a UFO as it hovered over the Humber Bridge at around 7.45pm on Sunday, July 27.

He said: "It was like a disk shape. I only saw it for about 10 seconds because it was moving so quickly."

Mr Shane Ford, (22), from St Luke's Street, KuH, saw the strange craft as he strolled down Freetown Way on the way to meet his girlfriend at about 8.30pm on Sunday, July 27.

He said: "It was towards the Humber Bridge and at first I thought it was a jumbo jet but it didn't seem to have any wings. It was cigar shaped and silver and moved very fast. It didn't make any noise or anything."

Pensioner Mrs Kathleen Maule (74), also saw the mysterious craft as she stood in the garden of her home in Amberley Close, near Sutton.

She said: "About nine o'clock I went into the garden and over the houses opposite was a row of three lights. There was no noise."

"I was watching it for about 10 minutes and I just can't explain, it was

strange," added Mrs Maule.

Rebecca Paffley (21), of Cottenham Road, KuH, saw a mysterious object from her window on Friday, July 25, as she watched television with her parents.

She said: "I saw a bright light outside and my Dad and I went outside to get a better look. It was cigar shaped, shiny blue in colour and moved a lot slower than a plane would. We watched it for about half an hour as it hovered over the house and then disappeared. We couldn't believe it."

One of the most recent and amazing sightings of a strange object was reported by Mr Malcolm Bean (49), from The Meadows, South Cave.

On Monday, August 4, Mr Bean observed a strange golden light with a hazy coloured light around it, in the sky over his house.

Mr Bean used high powered binoculars to get a closer look and tracked a mysterious object as it crossed the sky over his house.

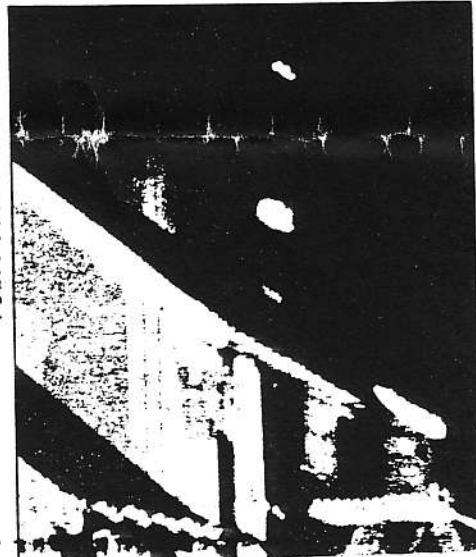
He said: "It began to move across the sky east to west, slowly and with no noise. Suddenly a blue dot flashed past it."

"I focussed on it with my binoculars and saw a cone-shaped object, without a distinct outline with what looked like glowing crystals covering it."

"I focussed on it several times to check I wasn't seeing things but it was still there."

Mr Bean watched the object for nearly half an hour before it finally disappeared.

"It disappeared really quickly without making any sound," he added.



THIS picture was taken by Hull Daily Mail reader Dave Ambler, in Humbleton. He believes it could be of a UFO.

### UFO sightings



*Astronomer has lots of explanations for those UFO sightings*

# Flying saucers: Stuart brings us down to Earth

A COCKERMOUTH astronomy enthusiast has come up with a number of possible explanations for a recent wave of UFO sightings over Cumbria.

Stuart Atkinson, secretary of Cockermouth Astronomical Society, says there is currently a lot happening in outer space, both man-made and natural, which could explain the UFO reports.

His explanations include shooting stars, satellites and even the Russian Mir space station.

"There's a lot of weird stuff going on up there that looks pretty strange if you're not used to seeing it," said Stuart.

"I'm not being a killjoy. I firmly believe in the existence of extraterrestrial life, but it'll be so far out there that it's very unlikely anyone has ever seen an alien spaceship."

Throughout August, he said, there would be a

By Carol Hogarth

greater than usual number of very bright shooting stars. He added that Jupiter was currently clearly visible as a bright bluish "star" in the east after sunset.

Weather and communications satellites could also be seen from the ground, and were covered in highly reflective metal panels which were still in the sun long after the earth was in darkness.

At certain times of the month, said Stuart, the Mir space station was visible from Britain and because it was so big it looked like a startlingly bright star and was often mistaken for a UFO.

Stuart stressed he did not dismiss people's claims of having seen UFOs but believed most sightings could be explained as astronomical phenomena or aircraft of some sort.

"I'd love to be proved wrong, and no one would like it more than me if a flying saucer came down in the middle of Cockermouth right now," he added.



**Astronomer Stuart Atkinson: It could be the Mir space station**

WESTERN DAILY PRESS (BRISTOL)

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## Spybase on 'UFO trail'

**Exclusive**

By Simon Haigh

THEY follow in the footsteps of aliens and terrify witnesses into public silence.

Nobody knows where they come from or where they go... The Men In Black have hit the movie screen this weekend in a smash-hit Hollywood comedy - but one West man says their real life counterparts come from GCHQ, Cheltenham.

Ufologist Robin Cole, from Cheltenham, claims the Government Communications Headquarters is monitoring - and covering up - UFO activity.

This week he has published a report, GCHQ and the UFO Cover-Up, in which he alleges evidence of the spy base's involvement with recent mysterious sightings.

Mr Cole, said: "I'm 100 per cent certain that GCHQ is involved with monitoring UFO activity when there's an intrusion into our airspace". He bases that on "inside" information.

It was an incident off Skegness, in Lincolnshire, last year, that convinced him.

He said: "At 3.14am on October 5, a Mr Leyland of Skegness police telephoned Yarmouth Coastguards to report an object witnessed over the sea by numerous police officers.

"He said: 'We can see a strange red and green rotating light in the sky directly south-east from Skegness.'

According to Mr Cole, it was the start of a major incident which lasted several hours and involved RAF Neathead, RAF Kinloss, Anglia Radar, the Ministry of Defence at Whitehall and GCHQ.

Mr Cole claims to have secretly met staff members of GCHQ, who have been publicly silenced by fear for their jobs, and the Official Secrets Act, which is as effective as any visit from the Men In Black.

ROSS-SHIRE JOURNAL

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### UFO sighting at Ullapool

SIGHTINGS of the unusual continue at Ullapool where a number of reports of Unidentified Flying Objects have been made in recent weeks.

The latest is that from Seonaid MacDonald who was walking from Jim Beck's house towards the wooden bridge over the river on Monday evening, July 14 when she observed a UFO just above the hills to the South of Lochbroom.

"The impression I had was of two circular bright dots close together, but definitely not stars or planets. They glowed — they were unusually bright," Seonaid said.

"The object remained stationary for at least 30 minutes."

A friend of Miss MacDonald had also noted an unusual object from the beach the previous week.

"I am planning to do a programme on Lochbroom FM to be transmitted on Wednesday, July 16 in which people who have reported recent sightings will be invited and sceptics will also be welcome to give their viewpoint," she said.

"If there is a good response I plan to do follow up programmes."

LUTON NEWS

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### Watch out, a UFO's about!

A report has been made to police in Milton Keynes about a metallic disc-shaped Unidentified Flying Object which travelled at about 300 mph over the town at 7.30 on Monday night.

The report said it then altered course and headed towards Luton at high speed.

• An amateur photographer took a picture of what he thinks

might be a UFO over Stopley at 7.30 on Wednesday evening.

David Joyce was taking photos of the Luton Youth Orchestra outside Stopley Baptist Church and did not notice a metallic object in the sky until he downloaded the pictures from his digital camera later.

He says it looks the wrong shape to be a hot air balloon.

KILMARNOCK STANDARD

25 JUL 97

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### Sinister craft seen hovering above the town

THERE has been another sighting of an unidentified vehicle flying over Kilmarnock.

It was seen flying over the town centre by an amateur astronomer, who described it as looking "sinister".

It was a large object and it rose above houses at 2am last Friday morning, then slowly flew off over London Road.

The object was kite shaped with three or four white lights around the edges and a flashing red light in the centre.

It moved off towards Galston, where a similar craft was seen recently.

The object was seen again about half an hour later moving South East.

The eyewitness, who did not want to be named, described how the object looked "sinister", as if it were on the prow.

Half an hour after that, he saw lightning in the sky, which was odd because it was a clear night.

This sighting comes after reports of UFOs over Dundonald and Galston few weeks ago.

# Sky's the limit for UFO buff

A PLYMOUTH UFO expert is snubbing a national one-night flying saucer hunt – because he says it is a waste of time.

Bob Boyd, of the Plymouth UFO Research Group, said he won't be taking part in the national Skywatch night, on August 12, because if you want to spot a UFO you have to look all year around.

The event, organised by a top UFO magazine, aims to get as many people as possible studying the heavens for signs of extra-terrestrial life.

It is hoped the look-out will provide concrete proof of UFOs. But Bob, a UFO spotter for 40 years, said: "They never come up with any hard evidence.

"These events are held two or three times a year, but if you are serious about UFOs you should be sky watching all the time."

Bob, 49, from Stoke, has seen unexplained objects on several occasions since he became interested in UFOs as a boy.

He added: "You could see a UFO at any time, anywhere. We used to go to Kit Hill, near Callington, because you can see for miles, but any high spot will do.

"But you are just as likely to see one

**BY WILLIAM TELFORD**

when you are sitting in your car.

"I even once saw one on a TV programme about standing stones – I rang the BBC and they checked the tape and confirmed it."

He said there have been a number of UFO sightings over Plymouth, the most recent on May 6.

"A 40-year-old businessman was coming out of a Chinese takeaway in Widewell at 11pm when he saw a silver ball, the size of a tennis ball, flying around in the sky," said Bob.

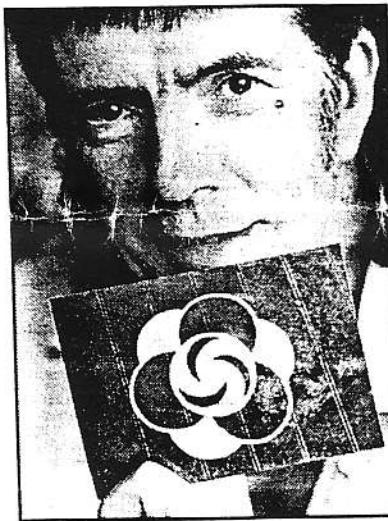
"He said he was shocked rigid, and had not been drinking. That's a typical UFO sighting."

But despite years of research Bob says that ufologists still have no idea what the mysterious sightings are.

He said: "We are no nearer knowing what they are than we were in 1947.

"We have got some evidence but it does nothing to make our understanding any clearer."

"Recently a lot of people have reported seeing a very bright light between 11pm and 1am – but it turned out to be Jupiter which is very bright at this



**BOB BOYD:** Turning a blind to UFOs

time of year. But if people do see anything they should contact me and I will log the sighting."

• The Plymouth UFO Research Group can be contacted on 565255.

## Abductions: Incidents in Scotland

**O**N November 9, 1979, a foreman forester, Robert Taylor, aged 61, employed by Livingstone Development Corporation, left home at 10am in a Forestry Department van to inspect young trees in Deans Forest.

He left the van and walked along a track with his red setter dog. At about 10.15am, he turned a corner and was confronted by a large dome-shaped object, hovering silently above the ground.

The estimated diameter of the object was six metres. He stood still for about 30 seconds, when two smaller spherical objects appeared to approach him. Each attached itself to his trousers (one each side) below the pockets. He felt suffocated by a strong smell and lost consciousness.

On recovering, the objects had gone. He had lost his voice and his legs would not support him. He crawled 90 metres and staggered 430 metres to the van. He tried to contact his base by radio but was still unable to speak.

He walked 1600 metres home by a short cut, arriving about 11.30am. The forester's wife telephoned his superior, Mr M. Drummond, who went with the victim to the site of the incident.

They found marks which were not there before that day. After examination by his doctor, he was sent to hospital for skull X-ray but walked out without this being done.

The police were called and made careful measurements of the 58 marks at the site. Photographs have been published of these and of the police diagram. The area was fenced off by the Forestry Department. The torn clothing went for forensic examination.

Police scientific opinion is that the tears could have been caused only by a strong mechanical pull and that they were not made by single points but by a broad attachment. A reconstruction showed that the victim was unconscious for about 25 minutes.

The temperature was 30C with a light wind from WSW. The reporter of the event had

worked with his employers for 16 years and was considered honest and responsible.

He drank very little and not at all when working. A plaque now marks the spot where the abduction took place.

Bob Taylor was the forester, Malcolm Drummond was the forest manager at the time, now retired.

Ian Waugh was the detective inspector for the case.

On August 18, 1992, Garry Wood, aged 32, an ambulance mechanic from Edinburgh, accompanied by his friend Colin Wright, was driving along the A70, from Ongangs to Tarbrax, in West Lothian, to deliver a satellite television dish to a friend.

They left at 10 pm and the journey should have taken half an hour, but they arrived two and a half hours later at Tarbrax, ashen-faced and shaking.

They had turned a corner near Harperrig Reservoir to be confronted by a spaceship hovering 25 feet above the ground. Garry accelerated, but as the car was going underneath it, "a shimmering curtain fell and we went into total blackness, I could not see anything."

Catriona Phillip, their friend, said: "they drew identical diagrams of the craft and the little men they had seen and both were adamant that they did not stop on the journey."

Garry agreed to regressive hypnotherapy by Dr Prem Misra, consultant psychiatrist, Parkhead Hospital, Glasgow.

Under hypnosis he talked about a wee man coming up to him as he lay on a stretcher or platform. He recalled two aliens, like "thin translucent, fragile-looking skeletal beings. They seemed to look right into my life. I didn't think these things existed but whatever they are, they have a life like me and you. They are here and I know more are coming."

Dr Misra has no doubt Mr Wood genuinely believed he had a close encounter and advised him to learn self-hypnosis to help his anxiety attacks (flash-backs, panic attacks and sleepless nights). His work-mates call him "Starman".

The following is a transcript from 'Cracking Stories' - Close Encounters, BBC 1, 8.30,

November 19, 1995.

Colin Wright: "We went round this bend, something caught my eye, I looked up, at first I thought overhanging trees, then I looked again, I thought it's not, it looks like a craft of some sort. It was 20 feet above the car, something on the road."

Garry Wood: "What the hell is that? It did not conform to anything I'd seen like a helicopter or a plane, or anything at all. Auctraiv, I panicked, got frightened. I took my arm and banged the button down on the driving side door, I crashed the car into third gear to accelerate really quickly to get underneath this object, to get away from it, but just as we got underneath this object, this light caught me, thin translucent, fragile-looking skeletal beings. They seemed to look right into my life. I didn't think these things existed but whatever they are, they have a life like me and you. They are here and I know more are coming."

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"I thought this is it, I'm going to crash, my number's up."

Colin: "I braced myself to crash, because when we went under, the whole surrounding area, Garry, the car, everything had disappeared."

Garry: "I was basically sitting in just darkness, nae car, nae Colin. I said to myself, what's

happened, am I dead? Then suddenly, the car was skidding all over the road. I tried to control the car."

Colin: "Garry was, like, putting his foot down, heading up the side of the embankment."

Garry: "Colin was shouting and bawling. I wasn't that interested, I was trying to get away from the object on the road. I was just terrified, I didn't know what it was."

Garry and Colin lost two hours out of their lives.

Catriona Phillip: "My husband and myself were in bed. Garry and Colin were banging on the glass door. I went to open it, Garry pushed open the door open and actually jammed my toe underneath the door."

"And the two men said, 'we've seen a UFO.'

"Immediately I started to laugh. Then they drew what they saw. Garry: 'Black in colour, it's not a very good drawing. Colin saw it first, he would draw it at a slightly different angle. This is basically what I saw. I never draw a shimmering effect like Colin did. I left Ongangs at the back of 10.'

Catriona: "You did not get here till after 12. What happened?"

Garry: "This craft emitted whatever it was, everything went black, it was (it felt like) only about 15 seconds or 10 seconds, then we were in the car again, driving like maniacs to get away from this craft."

"But from Ongangs to here would be half an hour but we seemed to take two hours. We're trying to get to the bottom of it, to try and get an answer. What actually happened and why it happened."

Colin: "The fact is Garry and me are different. I'm pretty easy-going about it now. As far as I'm concerned we got away with it."

To be continued.

In December 1995, Colin and Garry were interviewed by the BBC's "Close Encounters" team. The interview was broadcast on BBC 1 on December 11, 1995. The transcript of the interview is as follows: